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To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/16/02 8:26pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Sirs:

Thanks very much for giving the public the opportunity to voice opinion in the settlement of the MSFT case. The entire circumstance around this case is very upsetting. Some say it all came about because MSFT and Bill Gates didn't contribute enough to political campaigns, or have a huge lobby in Washington representing their interest. Some say it was the jealous competitors who did give political contributions and have a strong lobby in Washington that got the Justice Dept. to go along and punish MSFT. I personally hope none of this is the case, because if it were the case it would go against every principal, in this opinion, that our country is founded on. Americans today are so cynical and non-trusting of our government, including the Justice Department, that somewhere, someday, someone must have the courage to stand up and say: "This case was dreamed up, schemed up by some special interest. It has no merit. It was intended to destroy and/or punish a very successful corporation of which we are all jealous. Many of us in the D of J have never worked outside government, we are easily swayed by one sided propaganda and lacking experience in the outside world of free competition, we misjudged the collapse of our "Ivory Tower" thinking. We were wrong. We want to correct our wrong. Microsoft has done no wrong, but instead has contributed vast qualities of knowledge and productivity, while giving our entire country unbelievable economic gains."

Yea! Sure! The chances of that happening are zero. But somehow, we must stop letting the Government destroy everything that is good for a majority of our nation. Remember what it was like in the 1970's and 1980's, Americans had almost given up on everything! Then comes the 1990's and just when we get a leg up, the Justice Department come crashing everything down! If it wasn't so sad, it would be funny. The Justice system says that Bill Gates and company have done TERRIBLE things to Americans! Mercy! I wouldn't be e-mailing you now if it wasn't for Mr.

Gates and Company...My 80 year old Father would not be trading stocks now if it hadn't been for Mr. Gates & Co. I remember when personal computers first came out...We had to learn DOS commands, then we bought our software that could just do one tiny thing for hundreds of dollars, with hundreds of dollars worth of merit for each application we wanted to use. I remember! It was terrible. Everyone used something different, nothing was compatible, and most everything didn't work well. And, I don't get it...I looked at other operating systems as I bought more computers through the years...I looked at the Apple Mac system, I looked at the IBM OS2 system...How can the government say that MSFT is the only system? MSFT just kept adding new things that made computing easier, faster and cheaper for the customer. We had a choice! We made the choice and the choice was MSFT! Don't punish them for that!

Whatever you do, please don't impose such a harsh judgement that will make competition with other countries impossible! I am a cattle rancher and through the years I have sit by and watched the most productive agricultural county in the world be destroyed by government rules, laws and treaties. We can't compete anymore...the cost of labor, taxes, insurance, equipment are so high we can't produce anything as cheaply as it can be imported from other countries. As we in agriculture slowly go broke, it will just be a matter of time before the U.S. is dependent on other countries for all our food. Do we really want to

start technology down that road also? We all know that Japan, China, India or some other country will grab the leadership vacuum that MSFT leaves and the good ole US will once again forfeit the world leadership position in yet another area!

What will be left in this country to make a living? Surely there can't be enough government jobs for everyone?

Just look ahead...look down the road before making a punishment decision for MSFT or any American company. Just look at the companies over the years that our Government has attempted to punish as monopolies. Take Standard Oil...take Ma Bell...Government tinkers, imposes restrictions, punishments, etc., until either the companies go under, or the Government will give them permission to put the company together again. Look at the telephone companies, the big ones grabbing the small ones up until now there doesn't seem to be any profits for any US phone companies, but hold your hat for a foreign replacement. Look at the oil companies...didn't I recently read that all the Standard Oil Companies would soon be back under one Exxon-Mobile umbrella soon? "The more things change, the more they stay the same." I just don't get it? Can someone explain? So, please let the "free marketplace" work its magic and tell us what we like and what we don't like WITHOUT government interference.

Thanks, Polly Woodress

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